



Cerro Colorado and Cresta Escondida

Argentina-Chile, Central Andes

On November 14, Argentines Adrián Petrocelli and Ramiro Casas departed from Punta de Vacas, trekked along Quebrada Tupungato, and camped in Quebrada Potrero Escondido at ca 4,100m. The next day they continued to the foot of unclimbed Cerro Colorado (4,621m). On November 16 they attempted the east face of the peak, retreating at a high point of ca 4,500m due to avalanche hazard. The next day they witnessed a large avalanche sweep the face. With good weather on November 19, they started up the west face instead. Scree slopes led to snow runnels (30–40o, with some steps to 60o), a long leftward traverse, and a 4m rock step (V). Above this they gained a ridge that led to the summit.

The good weather persisted, and on November 20 they departed for an unclimbed and unnamed 4,970m summit west of Cerro Colorado. From the saddle between the two peaks (Portezuelo Cerro Colorado), they dropped to the base of the east face and then ascended an easy snow slope, which steepened near a rock band. Here, they climbed a 15m icefall with a vertical finish. Above this they gained the north side of the peak, climbing 40–50o. On the summit ridge they observed three rocky high points with vertical walls, the leftmost being the highest. They used cams to protect the final rock wall (V) and reach the small summit perch. They called the peak Cresta Escondida.

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Images



Cerro Colorado from the east.



Cerro Colorado's west side showing the line of the first ascent.

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